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Occupational Employment and Wages in Erie – May 2013

Workers in the Erie Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of $18.57 in May 2013, 17 percent below the nationwide average of $22.33, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Sheila Watkins, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were significantly lower than their respective national averages in 17 of the 22 major occupational groups, including arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media; management; and architecture and engineering. (See table A and box note at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Erie Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2013

	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Erie	United States	Erie	Percent difference [1]
Total, all occupations	100.0	100.0	$22.33	$18.57*	-17
Management	4.9	3.2*	53.15	45.87*	-14
Business and financial operations	5.0	3.5*	34.14	28.54*	-16
Computer and mathematical	2.8	1.0*	39.43	29.02*	-26
Architecture and engineering	1.8	1.6	38.51	31.45*	-18
Life, physical, and social science	0.9	0.2*	33.37	29.01*	-13
Community and social service	1.4	2.0*	21.50	18.54*	-14
Legal	0.8	0.3*	47.89	41.63	-13
Education, training, and library	6.3	6.5	24.76	26.16	6
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.3	1.3	26.72	19.07*	-29
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.8	6.7*	35.93	31.97*	-11
Healthcare support	3.0	4.4*	13.61	11.90*	-13
Protective service	2.5	2.3	20.92	20.29	-3
Food preparation and serving related	9.0	9.6*	10.38	9.72*	-6
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.2	3.3	12.51	10.61*	-15
Personal care and service	3.0	4.0*	11.88	10.21*	-14
Sales and related	10.6	11.4*	18.37	15.26*	-17
Office and administrative support	16.2	15.2	16.78	14.95*	-11
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.0*	11.70	17.84*	52
Construction and extraction	3.8	2.9*	21.94	20.58*	-6
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	3.5	21.35	17.90*	-16
Production	6.6	12.1*	16.79	16.50	-2

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Erie Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2013 - Continued

	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Erie	United States	Erie	Percent difference (1)
Transportation and material moving	6.8	4.9*	16.28	14.45*	-11

* The percent share of employment or mean hourly wage for this area is significantly different from the national average of all areas at the 90-percent confidence level.

(1) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in Erie is above the national mean wage, while a negative percent difference reflects a lower wage.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, Erie employment was more highly concentrated in 7 of the 22 occupational groups including production and healthcare support. Conversely, eight groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation; these groups included transportation and material moving, computer and mathematical, and management.

One occupational group—production—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Erie had 15,130 jobs in production, accounting for 12.1 percent of local area employment, significantly above the 6.6-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was $16.50, which was comparable to the national average of $16.79.

With employment of 1,400, welders, cutters, solderers, and brazers was the largest occupation within the production group, followed by machinists (1,030). Among the higher-paying jobs were first-line supervisors of production and operating workers ($27.87) and tool and die makers ($21.54). At the lower end of the wage scale were production worker helpers and team assemblers, with mean hourly wages of $11.43 and $12.07, respectively. (Detailed occupational data for production are presented in table 1.); for a complete listing of detailed occupations available go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_21500.htm.)

Location quotients allow us to explore the occupational make-up of a metropolitan area by comparing the composition of jobs in an area relative to the national average. (See table 1.) For example, a location quotient of 2.0 indicates that an occupation accounts for twice the share of employment in the area as it does nationally. In the Erie area, above-average concentrations of employment were found in several of the occupations within the production group. For instance, metal and plastic molding, coremaking, and casting machine setters, operators, and tenders were employed at over five-and-a-half times the national rate in Erie, and machinists at nearly three times the U.S. average. On the other hand, laundry and dry-cleaning workers had a location quotient of 0.8 in Erie, indicating that this particular occupation's local and national employment shares were similar.

These statistics are from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey, a federal-state cooperative program between BLS and State Workforce Agencies, in this case, the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry.

Note

OES wage and employment data for the 22 major occupational groups in the Erie Metropolitan Statistical Area were compared to their respective national averages based on statistical significance testing. Only those occupations with wages or employment shares above or below the national wage or share after testing for significance at the 90-percent confidence level meet the criteria.

NOTE: A value that is statistically different from another does not necessarily mean that the difference has economic or practical significance. Statistical significance is concerned with the ability to make confident statements about a universe based on a sample. It is entirely possible that a large difference between two values is not significantly different statistically, while a small difference is, since both the size and heterogeneity of the sample affect the relative error of the data being tested.

Technical Note

The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey is a semiannual mail survey measuring occupational employment and wage rates for wage and salary workers in nonfarm establishments in the United States. Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands are also surveyed, but their data are not included in the national estimates. OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Forms are mailed to approximately 200,000 sampled establishments in May and November each year for a 3-year period. May 2013 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected in May 2013, November 2012, May 2012, November 2011, May 2011, and November 2010. The overall national response rate for the six panels is 75.3 percent based on establishments and 71.6 percent based on employment. The sample in the Erie Metropolitan Statistical Area included 1,674 establishments with a response rate of 76 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm.

The OES survey provides estimates of employment and hourly and annual wages for wage and salary workers in 22 major occupational groups and 821 detailed occupations for the nation, states, metropolitan statistical areas, metropolitan divisions, and nonmetropolitan areas. In addition, employment and wage estimates for 94 minor groups and 458 broad occupations are available in the national data. OES data by state and metropolitan/nonmetropolitan area are available from www.bls.gov/oes/current/oessrcst.htm and www.bls.gov/oes/current/oessrcma.htm, respectively.

The May 2013 OES estimates are based on the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system and the 2012 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Information about the 2010 SOC is available on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/soc and information about the 2012 NAICS is available at www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm.

Area definitions

The substate area data published in this release reflect the standards and definitions established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

The **Erie, Pa. Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Erie County in Pennsylvania.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/ro3. Answers to frequently asked questions about the OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm. Detailed technical information about the OES survey is available in our Survey Methods and Reliability Statement on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/oes/2013/may/methods_statement.pdf. Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request – Voice phone: 202-691-5200; Federal Relay Service: 1-800-877-8339.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Erie Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2013

Occupation [1]	Employment [2]		Mean wage	
	Level	Location quotient [3]	Hourly	Annual [4]
Production occupations	15,130	1.8	$16.50	$34,310
First-line supervisors of production and operating workers	910	1.7	27.87	57,980
Electrical and electronic equipment assemblers	430	2.2	13.05	27,140
Structural metal fabricators and fitters	70	0.9	16.15	33,580
Team assemblers	790	0.8	12.07	25,110
Assemblers and fabricators, all other	110	0.5	[5]	[5]
Bakers	270	1.7	11.95	24,850
Butchers and meat cutters	120	0.9	14.83	30,850
Food batchmakers	240	2.3	13.19	27,440
Food cooking machine operators and tenders	50	1.6	12.91	26,860
Computer-controlled machine tool operators, metal and plastic	280	2.2	16.47	34,250
Computer numerically controlled machine tool programmers, metal and plastic	60	2.5	18.22	37,900
Forging machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	90	4.3	22.28	46,340
Cutting, punching, and press machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	720	4.0	12.92	26,870
Drilling and boring machine tool setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	70	3.8	16.18	33,650
Grinding, lapping, polishing, and buffing machine tool setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	290	4.3	13.93	28,980
Lathe and turning machine tool setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	190	4.9	17.01	35,380
Milling and planing machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	40	2.0	16.81	34,970
Machinists	1,030	2.8	18.91	39,330
Metal-refining furnace operators and tenders	60	2.9	16.71	34,750
Foundry mold and coremaking	[5]	[5]	13.06	27,160
Molding, coremaking, and casting machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	660	5.6	15.57	32,390
Multiple machine tool setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	290	3.3	[5]	[5]
Tool and die makers	260	3.5	21.54	44,810
Welders, cutters, solderers, and brazers	1,400	4.2	16.17	33,630
Welding, soldering, and brazing machine setters, operators, and tenders	70	1.4	16.35	34,010
Heat treating equipment setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	70	3.4	20.17	41,960
Plating and coating machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	130	3.9	17.56	36,530
Prepress technicians and workers	50	1.3	19.02	39,560
Printing press operators	240	1.5	16.23	33,750
Print binding and finishing workers	[5]	[5]	14.98	31,160
Laundry and dry-cleaning workers	150	0.8	$10.92	$22,700
Sewing machine operators	110	0.8	13.06	27,170
Sawing machine setters, operators, and tenders, wood	[5]	[5]	12.10	25,160
Woodworking machine setters, operators, and tenders, except sawing	110	1.7	13.63	28,350
Water and wastewater treatment plant and system operators	110	1.1	21.41	44,530
Gas plant operators	140	10.6	24.66	51,300
Chemical equipment operators and tenders	40	0.7	14.45	30,050
Separating, filtering, clarifying, precipitating, and still machine setters, operators, and tenders	30	0.9	18.81	39,130

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Erie Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2013 - Continued

Occupation [1]	Employment [2]		Mean wage	
	Level	Location quotient [3]	Hourly	Annual [4]
Mixing and blending machine setters, operators, and tenders	[5]	[5]	14.93	31,050
Cutting and slicing machine setters, operators, and tenders	30	0.6	11.90	24,750
Extruding, forming, pressing, and compacting machine setters, operators, and tenders	160	2.5	22.55	46,910
Inspectors, testers, sorters, samplers, and weighers	840	1.9	15.33	31,890
Dental laboratory technicians	60	1.8	21.45	44,610
Packaging and filling machine operators and tenders	110	0.3	15.93	33,140
Coating, painting, and spraying machine setters, operators, and tenders	110	1.4	14.32	29,790
Painters, transportation equipment	[5]	[5]	26.51	55,150
Cleaning, washing, and metal pickling equipment operators and tenders	30	2.1	12.35	25,680
Molders, shapers, and casters, except metal and plastic	50	1.6	12.39	25,770
Helpers--production workers	760	1.9	11.43	23,780
Production workers, all other	130	0.7	[5]	[5]

(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the Erie MSA, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_21500.htm .
(2) Estimates for detailed occupations do not sum to the totals because the totals include occupations not shown separately. Estimates do not include self-employed workers.
(3) The location quotient is the ratio of the area concentration of occupational employment to the national average concentration. A location quotient greater than one indicates the occupation has a higher share of employment than average, and a location quotient less than one indicates the occupation is less prevalent in the area than average.
(4) Annual wages have been calculated by multiplying the hourly mean wage by a 'year-round, full-time' hours figure of 2,080 hours; for those occupations where there is not an hourly mean wage published, the annual wage has been directly calculated from the reported survey data.
(5) Estimates not available.